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Cooking Techniques With

Olive Oil



Mary Platis & Laura Bashar

Cooking Techniques with Olive Oil

by
Mary Platis
and
Laura Bashar

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Mary Papoulias-Platis teaches culinary classes using a hybrid of recipes derived from her Greek heritage and California's fresh produce. She emphasizes sustainable and regional foods from farmers markets and local producers in all of her recipes. Mary is a chef, food blogger ([California Greek Girl](#)), Greek olive oil representative for a major olive oil brand, and owns and operates The Greek Gourmet catering company. She is the mother of three and lives in San Diego with her husband and dog, Hershey.

Laura Bashar is a former graphic designer and advertising account executive. She writes regularly for her food blog, [Family Spice](#), where she is able to let her inner artist out and express her creative voice through recipes and photography. She lives in San Diego with her husband and three children.

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-- Laura

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-- Mary and Laura

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Introduction



Meet Mary Papoulias-Platis (on the left)

In a Greek household, olive oil serves many purposes. Not only is it a staple in the kitchen, it's a key ingredient in every aspect of our lives. As a young girl, I remember watching my mother slather her arms and hands with olive oil. She would combine avocado, eggs and olive oil into a lotion and spread it over her face as a weekend cleansing mask. Now, I watch my husband use olive oil to remove motor oil and dirt from his hands after a long day in the garage. Who would have guessed? I often ask myself, "What *don't* Greeks use olive oil for?"

Though olive oil was always an integral part of my life, a recent trip to Greece changed the way I now think about it. My husband and I spent several days on Kythera, the island from which my husband's family immigrated. We toured ancient olive groves and experienced the entire process of making olive oil from olive to oil. I developed a new-found respect for first press and organic extra virgin olive oil due to the extensive hours of hard work that are required to produce a single bottle.

As a chef, I try to incorporate extra virgin olive oil into my cooking classes, blog recipes and home-cooked meals in any way imaginable. The more I learn about the endless uses of extra virgin olive oil, the more confidence I gain in cooking with this truly extraordinary ingredient. I continue to share these lessons through my recipes and cooking techniques on my food blog [California Greek Girl](#) – and now, you, too, can master the use of olive oil.

Meet Laura Bashar (on the right)

From my earliest memory, food has always been the center of family gatherings. Whether we were watching my grandmother carefully fan the flames for the perfect kabob or gathering with cousins to compare notes on our favorite dishes, we always talked about food or talked in the presence of food.

My mother is Iranian, my father American. I was raised eating gourmet meals ranging from Persian stews to shrimp scampi. Growing up, my mom loved to cook despite working full time as a micro-paleontologist. I often helped start family dinners and I loved trying to create eccentric dishes that I read about in cookbooks. Even when I was a young advertising executive, long before food blogs made their appearance, I collected magazines, tested the recipes I saw, and continued my journey with food.

And now, with a family of my own, I am teaching the same culinary lessons to my children. Their palate is refined. They recognize quality ingredients. To put it bluntly, they are spoiled. And why not? Why should bland starchy foods be the norm on the American dinner plate?

The first time I recognized quality in something as simple as olive oil was at an Italian restaurant, where I was served exquisite olive oil to bathe my freshly baked bread. I was in heaven. This was not the same olive oil I found at the supermarket. I closed my eyes and let the flavors take me to far and exotic places. I still have not opened my eyes.

My cooking philosophy is to choose high quality, wholesome ingredients, and let them shine and take center stage. It's about the food, the family gathered before it, and the love that is shared around the table. I share this love on my blog [Family Spice](#).

Our Mission

How often do you come home from buying a beautiful bottle of extra virgin olive oil and wish you had more uses for it, other than a salad dressing or sautéing up a quick dish? In this book you will learn the easy cooking techniques of poaching, braising, marinating, infusing, and baking with olive oil. Our goal is to teach you a new way of cooking and to help you master fundamental skills.

The cooking techniques in this book will sharpen your skills in the kitchen and acquaint cooks at all levels with these basic methods. Don't expect it to be overnight. Learning proper cooking techniques will take time, patience, practice and repetition. Soon, developing your own recipes will become easy and effortless, and you will have the knowledge and skills you need to successfully use olive oil in all your meals.

We chose Mediterranean recipes because most olive oils come from that region. But if you are fortunate to live in a state that produces local olive oil, we encourage you to buy locally and meet your farmers. We kept these recipes simple so you can have fun in the kitchen!

Chapter One:

A Lesson on Olive Oil

History of Olive Oil



The olive tree is one of the oldest known cultivated trees in the world. In fact, fossilized olive leaves 37,000 years old have been discovered on the Greek island of Santorini. Olive trees quickly spread to the rest of the Mediterranean basin, where the ancient Greeks, Egyptians and Romans used olives and its oil as a fixture in their daily lives. As a result, over the centuries we have had countless varieties of olives to choose from. Although Spain produces most of the world's olive oil, you can also find varieties from Greece, Italy, France, Australia, California and many other places around the world. However, the Greeks are the largest per capita consumers of olive oil worldwide.

Production of Olive Oil



In its simplest form, olive oil is produced by first grinding the olives into a paste. Next, the olive paste is pressed to extract the liquid, which consists of olive oil and water. Since oil and water have different densities, a centrifuge is used to quickly separate the two and prevent oxidation, which affects the flavor. Olive oil can also be produced by “cold-extraction,” which means that olive grinding is done at a temperature of no more than 77°F (25°C) to insure higher quality in taste, texture and aroma.

Extra virgin olive oils are the highest quality grade of olive oil. They must pass the standards of the industry and olive boards around the world. These standards and qualifications vary from country to country.



Varieties and Flavors of Olive Oil



The flavor of olive oil can change dramatically depending on the climate, soil conditions and the processing of the olives – resulting in the numerous varieties we have today. There are over 700 olive cultivars in the world, each of which produces one-of-a-kind flavor profile having unique nutritional and chemical properties.

As you cook and use olive oil daily, you will become more familiar with the many different varieties and their characteristics. Take a trip to a local olive grove for a tasting so you can determine which olive oil suits your taste.

As you begin to taste different varieties of olive oil, you will begin to notice slight to extreme differences in the flavors and bite. Think of it as you would wine varieties and how they vary. What determines these taste variations are the type of olives and how early or late in the harvest season they were pressed. Harvest begins in October and ends in February.

The olive changes color and flavor the longer it stays on the tree and begins to ripen. It starts out green, it moves to green-yellow, then changes to red, then purple, until it is (finally) very black. When the olives are harvested early in the season, in October, a greener more robust oil is produced. The taste is a more leafy green and leaves a burning sensation in the throat but has more healthful properties. Olives harvested later in January through February will be black and produce a milder oil.

Fragrant and fruity olive oil is typically from Spanish olives that are almost but not fully ripe. A greener and peppery taste comes from Tuscan-Style varieties. Leafy-green, grassy flavors develop mostly from Spanish and Greek olives pressed earlier in the year, which makes them strong and peppery. Whichever you decide on purchasing, enjoy olive oil liberally.



Listed below are just a few of the hundred different varieties of olives produced in the European and California regions.

- Greece: Koroneiki, Lianolia, Chrondrolia, Adramytini
- Spain: Picual, Arbequina, Hojiblanca, Manzanillo
- Italy: Frantoio, Leccnio, Pendolino, Moraiolo
- France: Picholine, Lucques, Bouteillan, Grossane
- California: Mission, Manzanillo, Arbosana, Arbequina
- Australia: Frantoio, Correggiola, Pendulina, Barouni

Selecting Olive Oil

Purchasing olive oil should be a simple and enjoyable trip down the shopping aisle. Buy olive oils in small bottles, as you begin your exploration, so you can experiment with many different oils. This is always wiser since olive oil has such a short shelf life, and it's difficult to use up a large bottle within a year. Once you have made your selection, reach for the bottle in the back of the shelf, where it has been away from the sunlight. Extra virgin olive oil will last longer because it has a lower acidity level and this will buy you more time. Once you get it home place your olive oil in a cool dry place, and keep it away from any heat.

Here are some quick tips:

- Shop at a store you can trust that has hand-selected, fine quality olive oils.
- Buy olive oil with a harvest date stamp on the label to ensure freshness.
- Buy a small quantity, so you use up the oil within one year.
- Buy olive oil in a dark bottle for protection against sunlight.
- Do not choose an oil by its color. Instead, you should smell and taste it.



Storing Olive Oil

Olive oil contains a high monounsaturated fat content, which allows it to be stored longer than other oils. Store olive oil in a dark cool place in your kitchen, away from the stove or other heating elements to prolong its shelf life. Most experts recommend you store olive oil at room temperature, especially high-quality extra virgin olive oil. Olive oil kept in a dark environment can last up to one year opened, and up to two years if left unopened. Replace the bottle if it is not dark, and place it in a stainless steel container or a dark wine bottle.

Cooking with Olive Oil



Olive oil has been associated with the healthy Mediterranean diet and can be used in the kitchen in many ways, as we have outlined in this book. Having one or more olive oils from each of the three profiles below will encourage you as a cook to experiment and find new combinations of flavors for your dishes, such as cooking ethnic foods with the oils from that region.

Olive oils have varying characteristics and can be identified by using descriptive phrases similar to wines.

Robust flavor: Pungent, spicy, peppery (felt in the throat). Use strong and robust extra virgin olive oils for your meats to make marinades or to drizzle on peppers or garlic.

Medium flavor: Fruity, olive, green (grassy, leaves, apples, other fruit). Use a well-rounded extra virgin olive oil for breads, baking, steamed vegetables and dips.

Delicate flavor: Mild, buttery, sweet taste. This oil can be incorporated in cakes, cookies, and sauces.

The Mediterranean Diet



When people ask what the Mediterranean diet is, you must think “Olive Oil.” Along the Mediterranean Sea runs a long tradition of growing, producing, harvesting and cooking with olive oil. The Mediterranean diet is very popular as people seek more healthful ways of eating.

One important element of this diet, which most people are not familiar with, is the change of lifestyle that is often accompanied with the diet. A regular eating schedule is one important aspect to this lifestyle. This includes prepping, cooking, eating dinner together as a family, and enjoying each other’s company. Adding a glass of red wine to dinner is often the pleasurable choice of drink among the people of the Mediterranean, or one may drink tea. Staying active is another critical aspect of this culture that can improve longevity. It does not have to be strenuous exercise. It could be walking to local shopping areas or to work, gardening, involvement in a sport or attending community events. Having a belief system, whether it’s a religion or simply a gathering of like-minds, is also considered a factor in keeping your mind and body healthy and strong.



Many have adopted the Mediterranean diet here in the U.S. simply because it is mainly a plant-based diet, one that supports eating less meat and consuming more wild greens, grains, beans, vegetables, nuts and fruits. [The Harvard School of Public Health](#) developed a food pyramid that is based on this diet by conducting a study of the inhabitants of Ikaria, Greece and the Sicilians of southern Italy. They and many other researchers, such as the [Blue Zone Research](#), have found that the longest living centenarians (people who live to age 100 and above) lived in these regions.

One important key to a healthy diet is to substitute good fats for bad fats, and to avoid trans-fats. This returns us to the subject of olive oil. The love of olive oil is the common thread that the Mediterranean culture embraces in their everyday life. Extra virgin olive oil is the only oil they use in their daily cooking, and has been shown to have a remarkable variety of health benefits. Learn more about the Greek Diet [here](#).

Chapter Two:

Poaching with Olive Oil

Poaching in olive oil is a technique that transfers heat from the olive oil to the item being cooked. Always poach at a gentle simmer around 160-180°F. The meat that is being poached should be totally submerged in the olive oil or liquid. An instant-read thermometer is necessary for an accurate gauge of readiness. When you think about the meat being cooked, think of it as being in a nice warm bath. Vegetables can be partially submerged and the same results are achieved.

So why poach meats or vegetables in a bath of olive oil when there are a multitude of other methods? Just try it and you will become a convert. The meat or vegetable emerges evenly cooked and immensely tender with a subtle hint of the oil's flavors. Adding herbs and spices to the oil further elevates the aromatic qualities and tastes of a dish.

Tips on Poaching:

- Find the right size pot, not too big, not too small. Food should be snug but not touching.
- A “quivering” movement is the right description of the liquid temperature.
- The poaching oil can be reused again, whether for a vinaigrette or to be used in cooking. Bring the poaching oil to a boil, then allow it to cool to room temperature. After it is cooled, strain the oil and keep it refrigerated. It will keep refrigerated for up to one week.





Poached Rosemary-Garlic Lamb Chops with Mashed Potatoes and Artichokes

Thick lamb loin chops are poached in a fragrant garlic and rosemary bath. Add these lovely silken potatoes as a standout side dish and you have a true Mediterranean meal.

Serves 4

Ingredients:

8 lamb loin chops (about 1-inch thick)
salt and freshly ground pepper
2-4 cups extra virgin olive oil
2 garlic cloves, crushed
2 sprigs fresh rosemary

Garnish Ingredients:

½ teaspoon sea salt
1 tomato, chopped
¼ cup canned artichoke hearts, in water, drained and chopped
1 green onion, chopped

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 225°F.
2. Choose an ovenproof baking dish or pan large enough to submerge the chops without touching one another.
3. Add rosemary and garlic to the pan.
4. Sprinkle the chops with salt and pepper on both sides. Add to the pan.
5. Pour the olive oil into the pan, covering all the chops completely.
6. Place the chops in the oven.
7. After 20 minutes turn the chops over in the oil, and return pan to the oven for another 10 minutes.
8. Begin the mashed potatoes while the chops are cooking. (See recipe below)
9. Insert an instant-read thermometer into a chop. Temperature for medium is 160°F.
10. Remove the pan from the oven.
11. Lift the chops out of the oil and place on a paper towel to drain.
12. Before serving, sprinkle with sea salt, tomato, artichoke and onion for garnish.

Mashed Potatoes with Artichokes

Ingredients:

4 russet potatoes, peeled and coarsely chopped
4 garlic cloves, peeled
½ cup warm milk
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
1 13.75-ounce can artichoke hearts in water, drained, chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Place a large pot of salted water on high heat and bring to boil.
2. Add chopped potatoes and garlic. Bring back to a boil and reduce the heat to medium.
3. Cook 15-20 minutes until a knife inserted into potatoes removes easily. Drain the potatoes.
4. Place the potatoes back in the warm pan to remove any excess moisture.
5. Mash the potatoes using a ricer, food mill or by hand with a fork or spoon.
6. Add warm milk and olive oil. Stir until thoroughly mixed.
7. Stir the chopped artichokes into the potatoes and mix thoroughly. Add salt and pepper to taste.
8. Serve warm alongside the lamb chops.



Poached Tomatoes and Onions in Olive Oil with Fresh Basil

There is nothing like the taste of warm tomatoes poached with two classic flavors, spicy plump garlic cloves and sweet fresh basil. Serve the tomatoes straight from the dish, rustic-style. Add slices of freshly baked bread to scoop up the softened flesh of the tomatoes and the flavored olive oil goodness.

Serves 6

Ingredients:

3 large tomatoes, peeled and cored
3 large onions, peeled and cored
12 fresh basil leaves
3-4 cups extra virgin olive oil
6 garlic cloves, peeled
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
2-3 fresh basil leaves, julienned for garnish
1 loaf of artisan bread, sliced

Instructions:

1. Heat oven to 375°F. Line the bottom of a large ovenproof dish with the basil leaves.
2. Place the tomatoes and onions core side down in the dish so they are snug but not touching.
3. Pour enough olive oil to cover the tomatoes and onions halfway. Add the garlic.
4. Bake for 45-60 minutes or until the tomatoes and onions are soft.
5. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and freshly sliced basil
6. Slice and toast the bread and serve with the warm tomatoes and onions.



Poached Tuna with Citrus-Avocado Salad

Deliciously moist tuna steaks, elegantly cooked in an orange-scented olive oil bath, served with a butter lettuce salad and a trio of citrus fruits.

Serves 4

Ingredients:

4 1-inch-thick tuna steaks
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
2-4 cups extra virgin olive oil zest from one orange
2 bay leaves

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 225°F. Select an ovenproof pan or dish to fit the tuna steaks close but not touching.
2. Sprinkle both sides of the tuna steaks with salt and pepper.
3. Pour the cold oil into the pan and place in oven until the temperature reaches 180°F.
4. Add the orange zest and bay leaves to the oil. Slowly drop in the tuna steaks.
5. Return the pan to the oven and cook for 20 minutes. The tuna must be cooked thoroughly and have an internal temperature of 130°F. Because the tuna is being heated at such a low temperature, only when it is completely cooked can you insure that any bacteria has been removed.
6. Place tuna steaks on a plate and keep warm.

Citrus-Avocado Salad

Ingredients:

1 large head of butter lettuce, washed and dried
2 avocados, peeled and sliced
1 orange, peeled and segmented
1 grapefruit, peeled and segmented
1 tangerine, peeled and segmented
½ red onion, peeled and sliced
½ cup toasted sliced almonds

Vinaigrette Ingredients:

½ cup extra virgin olive oil
¼ cup rice wine vinegar
½ cup fresh cilantro, chopped
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Instructions:

1. Tear the lettuce into bite size pieces and place in a large bowl.
2. Add the avocados, orange, grapefruit, tangerine and onion.
3. Sprinkle the almonds on top.
4. For the vinaigrette, add the vinegar and salt in a small bowl. Whisk to blend.

5. Add the remaining vinaigrette ingredients. Continue whisking.
6. Serve with the tuna steaks.



Poached Leek and Oregano Chicken Breasts with Asparagus and Pea Orzo

The flavors of this leek and oregano poached chicken will offer you the experience of an alfresco dinner in the Greek countryside. Add the orzo and farm fresh vegetables to this dish to complete the flavors of the Aegean Sea.

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 4 chicken breasts, boneless and skinless salt and freshly ground pepper
- 2 leeks, washed and cut into rounds (white only)
- 2 sprigs fresh oregano
- 2-4 cups extra virgin olive oil

Garnish Ingredients:

- 1 fresh tomato, chopped

¼ cup parsley, chopped
¼ teaspoon salt
⅛ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 225°F. Select an ovenproof pan or dish to fit the chicken close but not touching.
2. Sprinkle the breasts with salt and pepper on both sides. Add the chicken to the pan.
3. Place the leeks and garlic in the bottom of the dish.
4. Pour the olive oil in the pan enough to cover the chicken.
5. Place the dish in the oven and cook for 20 minutes. Turn chicken and cook for another 10 minutes.
6. Check the chicken with a meat thermometer and remove when temperature reaches 165°F.
7. Combine the garnish ingredients in a small bowl.
8. Place chicken on a plate and garnish with tomatoes.

Asparagus and Pea Orzo

Ingredients:

4 quarts water
1 teaspoon salt
2 cups uncooked orzo
1 bunch asparagus, trimmed and chopped into 1-inch pieces
2-3 teaspoons olive oil
2 cups frozen peas, defrosted
4 green onions, chopped
½ cup toasted pine nuts
½ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese

Garnish Ingredients:

1-2 teaspoons olive oil
juice from ½ lemon

Instructions:

1. Bring a large pot of water to boil and add salt. Slowly add orzo, stir and return to a boil. Continue cooking until orzo is soft, about 5 more minutes.
2. Add asparagus pieces to the orzo.
3. Drain and transfer to a large bowl. Stir in 2-3 teaspoons of olive oil.
4. Add peas, green onions and pine nuts to the orzo and mix gently.
5. Stir in the parmesan cheese.
6. Garnish with olive oil and lemon.



Chapter Three:

Braising with Olive Oil

Braising is a gentle, slow cooking technique in which the food is browned first, then finished by simmering. Of all the techniques described, this one will bring you the best results if you keep a few key steps in mind. Most braises involve larger cuts of meat and less liquid than stews. But the key here is to keep the temperature low, well below boiling, at a simmer. The cooked meat should be allowed to cool in the liquid, and is best served below the cooking temperature. Most braises taste better the next day, once the flavors have had time to develop.

Tips on Braising:

- Keep the meat in large pieces to preserve the juices, cutting the meat into pieces no smaller than 2 inches.
- Brown, or sear, the meat very quickly in a hot pan to prevent cooking the inside of the meat.
- Do not cover the meat with liquid, as adding too much liquid will dilute the flavors of the dish.
- Cook for long periods of time and stop cooking when the meat is easily pierced by a fork. Remove the meat from the pan before making a sauce with the leftover liquid.
- A heavy-gauge pot with a lid is ideal because it distributes the heat evenly and helps to protect the foods from cooking too quickly.





Fresh Tomato Braised Risotto

What could be better than fresh tomatoes with rice? This is a match made in heaven: warm creamy Arborio rice steeped in a tomato sauce with freshly picked basil. Perfect for a quick hearty lunch or a casual summer supper on the porch. *Bellissimo!*

Serves 6

Ingredients:

4 cups chicken or vegetable stock
6 tomatoes, seeded and coarsely chopped
4-6 leaves of fresh basil
4 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil, divided
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 cups Arborio rice
2 teaspoons dried oregano
1-2 teaspoons salt
½-1 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
2 teaspoons butter
½ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese

Garnish Ingredients:

1-2 fresh tomatoes, sliced
3-4 basil leaves, julienned

Instructions:

1. Bring the stock to a simmer over low heat in a medium pot.
2. In a small saucepan, add the tomatoes and basil and cook on low until warm. Remove the basil.
3. Place a large Dutch oven or a deep 4-quart skillet over medium heat. Add 2 teaspoons olive oil. When the olive oil is sizzling, add the garlic and stir for 2 minutes.
4. Stir in the rice and oregano and sauté for 2 more minutes.
5. Begin adding the warm tomatoes slowly into the rice, one cup at a time, stirring constantly. Cook until all liquid has been absorbed and continue stirring. Add the remainder of the tomatoes in batches until all the sauce has been used.
6. Season with salt and pepper.
7. Stir in the stock, one cup at a time, until all of it has been added.
8. Taste again and adjust the seasonings. It is perfectly cooked when the rice is tender to the bite.
9. Stir in the butter and the parmesan cheese.
10. Drizzle with the remaining 2 teaspoons of olive oil.
11. Garnish with a slice of fresh tomato on each plate and sprinkle with basil.





Braised Chicken with Carrots and Fennel

If you are craving comfort food, turn to this classic Greek chicken dish where thighs and legs are braised in wine and lemon juice then slow-cooked with warm fall vegetables. Serve this dish alone or alongside a grain, rice or green salad. Add olives, capers and a sprinkling of freshly chopped parsley before serving.

Serves 4

Ingredients:

4 chicken drumsticks
4 chicken thighs
salt and freshly ground pepper
2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
2 fennel bulbs, topped, cored and sliced
2 pounds carrots, peeled, quartered, and sliced lengthwise
½ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
½ cup white wine
½ cup chicken broth

Garnish Ingredients:

½ cup olives
1 tablespoon capers, rinsed
½ cup chopped fresh parsley

Instructions:

1. Wash and pat dry the chicken. Salt and pepper both sides.
2. Add olive oil to a large Dutch oven, over medium heat.
3. When the oil is hot, add the chicken and brown on both sides, about 5 minutes for each side.
4. Remove chicken from the pan and place on a plate.
5. Add the fennel and carrots to the pot and braise for 4-5 minutes, until slightly cooked.
6. Return the chicken to the vegetables, adding the lemon juice and wine.
7. Bring to a boil then reduce to a simmer. Cook until juices from the chicken run clear, about 45 minutes to 1 hour.
8. Add chicken broth to prevent any scorching.
9. Garnish with olives, capers, and fresh parsley.



Braised Lamb Shanks with Rosemary, Garlic and Gigante Beans

This traditional lamb dish is braised with garlic and rosemary for 3 hours, so plan ahead and enjoy the lovely aroma playing throughout your house as this dish slowly cooks in your oven. You don't have to save this dish for special occasions or holidays. It can serve six people and is easily doubled for a big crowd. This dish is best when made the night before. Serve with a side of traditional Greek gigante beans, also called "broad beans." You can learn more about gigante beans [here](#).

Serves 6

Ingredients:

6 lamb shanks (1 to 1½ pounds each)
salt and freshly ground pepper
2 cups red wine
1 cup extra virgin olive oil
½ cup fresh lemon juice
¼ cup fresh garlic, chopped
2 6-inch sprigs of fresh rosemary
6 carrots, peeled and sliced lengthwise

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
 2. Salt and pepper both sides of each shank.
 3. Place shanks on a hot grill or sauté pan and brown on all sides, about 15 minutes.
 4. Whisk together wine, olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, salt and pepper.
 5. Transfer shanks to a deep ovenproof casserole dish and pour sauce over the shanks. Be certain to completely cover the shanks with liquid. Place sprigs of rosemary around the shanks.
 6. Cover the dish tightly with foil and place in the middle of a hot oven. Roast for 3 hours.
 7. Remove the shanks and add the carrots. Cover again and cook for one more hour.
- The shanks are done when the meat is easily pierced with a fork and is falling off the bone.
8. Remove from the oven and allow shanks to rest for 10 minutes.
 9. Transfer shanks to a serving dish and serve with the gigante beans.

Braised Gigante Beans with Vegetables

Ingredients:

2 cups cooked gigante beans or 16-ounce can large lima beans
4 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil, divided
1 celery stalk, chopped
1 carrot, chopped
½ small onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 tomatoes, seeded and coarsely chopped
1 cup broth (chicken or vegetable)
½ cup parsley, finely chopped
1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1 teaspoon dried oregano

Instructions:

1. Heat a deep sauté pan over medium heat and add 2 teaspoons of olive oil.
2. Stir in celery, carrot, onion, garlic, tomatoes and broth. Cook for 5 minutes.
3. Add gigante beans to the vegetables.
4. Stir in the parsley, salt, pepper and oregano.
5. Reduce the heat to simmer, cover the pan and cook for 45 minutes or until the beans are tender.
6. Before serving, drizzle with remaining teaspoons of olive oil and oregano.



Greek Style Braised Vegetables with Tomatoes

This dish is commonly found in Greek households, and often made with what is available from the garden that day. Braising vegetables allows the flavors to blend together for a terrific meal. This meal is normally served with a nice chunk of bread and tastes even better the next day!

Serves 6

Ingredients:

4 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil, divided
3 onions, peeled and sliced
3 garlic cloves, chopped
3 russet potatoes, peeled, sliced in half and quartered lengthwise
4 carrots, peeled and sliced in half
½ pound green beans, trimmed
4 zucchini, halved lengthwise and cut into 2-inch pieces
1 large eggplant, chopped in 1-inch pieces
2 tomatoes, chopped or 4 ounces of tomato sauce
2 teaspoons dried oregano
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
2 teaspoons fresh parsley, chopped

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Place a large sauté pan over medium heat and add 2 teaspoons olive oil.
3. Sauté the onions until soft, about 5 minutes, then add garlic and cook for 1 minute.
4. Transfer the onion mixture into a large casserole dish.
5. Add the potatoes, carrots, beans, zucchini, eggplant, tomatoes, oregano, salt and pepper.
6. Sprinkle with the remaining olive oil.
7. Cover with foil and bake until vegetables are tender, about one hour.
8. Garnish with fresh parsley and serve warm or room temperature.



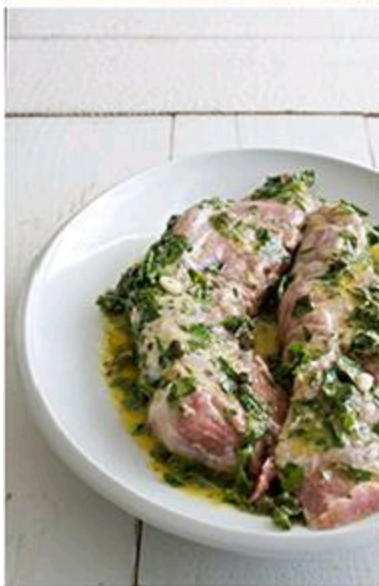
Chapter Four:

Marinating with Olive Oil

Marinades are usually acidic in nature. Originally made only with vinegar, marinades now include wine, fruit juices, buttermilk and yogurt. The ingredients are immersed in the marinade for as little as a few hours or up to several days before cooking. Meats are marinated to improve their flavors and to make them moist and tender. Cutting the meat in smaller pieces reduces the marinating time. Marinades are not only for flavor but they also have health benefits. They reduce the carcinogenic substances formed on foods when you grill or fry at high temperatures.

Tips on Marinating:

- Place the marinade in a plastic bag with the meat and make sure the meat is totally covered by the marinade.
- Adding spices and herbs heightens the marinade flavor.
- Marinating times vary according to the food's texture. A tougher cut may require marinating for several days.
- Always cover and refrigerate marinated foods. Before cooking, remove as much of the marinade as possible and pat the meat dry, so that it does not burn when cooked.
- If marinating fish, leave in the marinade for one hour maximum. If left longer, the vinegar will start to “cook” the fish.





Marinated Chicken Kabobs with Cucumber-Mint Barley

These quick and easy lemon-marinated chicken kabobs can be made for any evening dinner and served with our refreshing Cucumber-Mint Barley salad. This satisfying and healthful combination will be a hit with your family and friends. Grill the kabobs outside on a grill or inside using a grill pan. Chicken can be marinated and refrigerated the night before to make dinner the next night a breeze.

Serves 6

Ingredients:

6 chicken breasts, boneless and skinless
1 10-ounce box of cherry tomatoes, washed
1-2 red onions, cut into 1-inch chunks
1 cup of kalamata olives, pitted
2 lemons for garnish

Marinade Ingredients:

1 cup extra virgin olive oil
½ cup fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Instructions:

1. Combine all the marinade ingredients in a plastic bag.
2. Cut the chicken into 1-inch cubes and place in the marinade. Seal and refrigerate for three hours or overnight.
3. Soak bamboo skewers in water for 1 hour to prevent burning them when grilling.
4. Skewer the chicken pieces, alternating with the tomatoes, onions and olives.
5. Preheat the barbecue or oiled grill pan over medium-high heat.
6. Cook until chicken juices are clear and chicken is browned, or until internal temperature is 165°F.
7. Squeeze extra lemon juice on kabobs and serve.

Cucumber-Mint Barley Salad

Ingredients:

1 pound barley
2 cups tomatoes, peeled and chopped
2 cups cucumbers, peeled and chopped
2½ cups fresh parsley, chopped
½ cup mint, chopped
¼ cup green onions, thinly sliced
1 cup extra virgin olive oil
½ cup fresh lemon juice
salt to taste

freshly ground pepper

Instructions:

1. Place barley in a bowl and cover with cold water, let stand for 30 minutes. Drain the barley well.
2. Place the barley in a medium saucepan, cover with 2 inches of water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 40-50 minutes, until liquid has been absorbed.
3. Drain the barley and rinse with cold water.
4. In a large bowl, toss the barley with tomatoes, cucumbers, and parsley, mint and green onions.
5. In a small bowl, whisk together the oil and lemon juice.
6. Pour the vinaigrette over the barley, season with salt and pepper and toss together.
7. Serve immediately or chill until serving.



Marinated Mediterranean Vegetables in Olive Oil

This brightly colored vegetable combo will dress up any cheese board for a dramatic presentation. Serve with cold cuts, breads, artisan cheeses, and pickles.

Yield: 5-6 cups

Ingredients:

3 red bell peppers
3 yellow bell peppers
½ cup fresh fava beans, or ½ cup canned small white beans
5 garlic cloves, sliced
1 cup mixed olives, drained
1 15-ounce can artichokes in water
1 10-ounce box of white button mushrooms, cleaned

Marinade Ingredients:

¾ cup extra virgin olive oil
⅓ cup sherry vinegar
½ teaspoon dried oregano
½ teaspoon dried basil
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Instructions:

1. Roast peppers in a 400°F oven until blistered. Place in a bowl while hot and cover with plastic wrap for 15 minutes. Peel the peppers and cut into strips. Place in a large bowl.
2. Place baby fava beans in a small pot of boiling water and cook until tender. Drain the water and cool. If using baby fava beans, you do not need to remove the outer skin. If using larger fava beans, discard the outer skin. If using canned white beans, rinse and drain.
3. Add the beans, garlic, olives, artichokes and mushrooms to the peppers.
4. To make the marinade, whisk the olive oil, vinegar, oregano, basil, salt and pepper in a small bowl. Gently toss the vegetables with the marinade.
5. Place in a jar or deep bowl, cover and refrigerate for up to three weeks.

Note: Fresh fava beans are incredibly tasty. Learn more about fava beans [here](#).





Marinated Pork Tenderloin with Fresh Herbs and Italian-Style Bulgur

The savory combination of fresh parsley, thyme and rosemary makes this pork tenderloin an exceptional dinner entrée, perfect for an evening of entertaining or a family-style dinner during the week. Italian spices perk up ordinary bulgur wheat, making it an ideal pairing with this herbed marinated pork dish.

Serves 6

Ingredients:

2 cups fresh parsley, chopped
½ cup fresh thyme, chopped
¼ cup fresh rosemary, finely chopped zest from one lemon
¼ cup fresh lemon juice
3 cloves garlic
1 tablespoon salt
½ cup extra virgin olive oil
1 2-pound boneless pork tenderloin, halved
2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil

Instructions:

1. Place the parsley, rosemary, lemon zest, juice, garlic and salt in a food processor.
2. Process for 10 seconds then slowly add ½ cup olive oil.
3. Divide sauce in half.
4. Place half the sauce in a bag and add the pork to marinate. Seal the bag and refrigerate for 3 hours or up to overnight. Reserve the other half of sauce aside to serve with the pork.
5. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
6. Add 2 teaspoons of olive oil in a large oven-safe sauté pan and bring to medium-high heat.
7. Add the pork tenderloin and brown evenly on all sides.
8. Place the hot pan in the oven and roast for 30 minutes or until the internal temperature of the roast reaches 160°F.
9. Transfer pork to a serving platter and slice.
10. Top the pork with the reserved sauce and serve.

Italian-Style Bulgur Wheat

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
½ cup dry sun-dried tomatoes, minced
1 teaspoon salt
2 cloves garlic, minced
1½ cups bulgur
2 cups water
¼ cup fresh lemon juice
¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

½ cup toasted pine nuts
salt and freshly ground pepper

Instructions:

1. Place the olive oil in a sauté pan and heat to medium.
2. Add the cherry tomatoes and cook for 5 minutes.
3. Add the sun-dried tomatoes, season with 1 teaspoon salt.
4. Reduce the heat to medium-low, add garlic and the bulgur, and sauté for 2 minutes.
5. Add 2 cups of water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 20-25 minutes.
6. Fluff with a fork and stir in the lemon juice, pine nuts and parsley.
7. Season with salt and pepper and serve warm.



Marinated Sockeye Salmon with Beet and Spinach Greens

For an elegant yet simple dinner, marinate salmon in wine and lemon and serve with a healthful serving of greens that complement the fresh, rich taste of sockeye. Do not marinate the salmon for more than 60 minutes or the marinade will begin to “cook” the fish.

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 1 3-pound sockeye salmon fillet
- 3 thinly sliced lemons

Marinade Ingredients:

- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup white wine
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- ½ tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- ½ teaspoon parsley, chopped
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Instructions:

1. Place salmon in an oiled baking dish.
2. Mix the marinade ingredients together and pour marinade on the fish. Let the fish marinate for 30 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 400°F.
4. Place lemon slices on top of salmon.
5. Bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes until fish flakes easily with a fork, or has an internal temperature of 140°F.

Beet and Spinach Greens

Ingredients:

- 3 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 bunch of beet greens, washed and coarsely chopped
- 1 bunch of spinach, washed and coarsely chopped
- juice from 2 lemons
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Instructions:

1. Add 1 teaspoon of olive oil to a large sauté pan and heat to medium. Add garlic and stir.
2. Add the greens and sauté until wilted, about 5 minutes.
3. Remove from pan and place on a platter.

4. Mix the remaining 2 teaspoons of olive oil, lemon juice, salt and pepper.
5. Add the dressing to the greens and serve.

Chapter Five:

Healthy Steamed Recipes Enhanced with Olive Oil

Steaming is a common cooking method in which water is brought to a rolling boil, creating steam. Food is placed in a basket or tray above the boiling water so that it is not in direct contact with it. Instead, the steam passes through the steam basket and surrounds the food, cooking it. A lid is placed over the food and pot, keeping the steam trapped inside and continuously cooking the food.

There are multiple ways to cook with steam. A metal basket can be inserted into the bottom of a pot that rests inches above the boiling water. Stackable Chinese bamboo baskets can also be used. Small metal stands that raise the food above the water are another option. All of these methods steam food over the stove with a pot of boiling water. You can also steam in the oven by wrapping your meat and vegetables in parchment paper. The moisture from the food becomes trapped in the sealed parchment container, thus providing steam that cooks the food while it bakes.

Steamed food is typically healthier, requires less fat, and results in a moist meal that retains more of its nutrients compared to other cooking methods. So, if foods prepared by steaming are healthier and have less fat, why add fat by using olive oil? Although olive oil does contain healthy fats our body needs, the main reason to add olive oil to your steamed food is to enhance flavor.

In this chapter, the foods are steamed using multiple methods, but water is not completely eliminated since the food item being steamed releases its own liquid during the steaming process. The meat or vegetable being steamed is typically coated with olive oil to provide more flavor to an otherwise bland-tasting dish.

Tips on Steaming:

Wrap meats in an edible lettuce or cabbage leaf, or set into either a parchment or foil envelope.

The meat should be placed in a single layer to insure even cooking.

The pot should contain enough water that it does not dry out as steam escapes.

Keep lids tight on the pot and heat over high heat so that the pot's inside atmosphere is saturated with vapor.

Herbs and spices can be used to infuse the item.





Basmati Rice with Potatoes, Dill and Saffron

Basmati rice is a staple food for most Middle Eastern countries. This recipe is Persian, uses dill and is dairy-free. The rice is parboiled, then drained. It is then returned to the pot, olive oil is added, and the rice is cooked over low heat until done. But don't throw out the potato crust. Everyone fights for the *tadigh*! New to basmati rice? [Click here](#) for a video tutorial on making basmati rice.

Serves 4-6

Ingredients:

8 cups water
1¼ teaspoons salt, divided
2 cups white basmati rice
6-7 strands of saffron
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided
8 ounces russet potato, peeled and sliced into ¼-inch rounds
½ cup (4 ounces) dried dill

Instructions:

1. Pour the water in a large nonstick pot, stir in 1 teaspoon salt, cover and bring to a boil over high heat.
2. While waiting for the water to boil, place the rice in a bowl and cover with cold water.
3. Stir the rice with your hands to remove dirt and extra starch. Pour the water out. Rinse and drain two more times. Set aside.
4. Using a mortar and pestle, grind the saffron. Add 1 tablespoon hot water from the boiling water and pour it into the saffron. Set aside and reserve.
5. When the water comes to a boil, add the drained rice. Cook until the rice is half done and still crunchy in the center, about 6 minutes.
6. Pour rice through a fine mesh colander to drain.
7. Return the pot to the stove and place over medium heat. Add 2 tablespoons of olive oil to coat the bottom. Place the potato slices in one layer lining the bottom of the pot. Season potatoes with ¼ teaspoon of the salt.
8. Using a spatula, gently scatter scoopfuls of drained rice over the potatoes, just covering the potatoes. Do not press down on the rice or tap the spatula against the pot. You want to insure space and gaps within the rice for steam to pass. This will also keep the rice from turning to mush.
9. Generously scatter dried dill over the first layer of rice, until mostly covered. Continue adding layers of rice and dill until everything is back in the pot.
10. Using the handle of your spatula, gently press a hole through the center of the rice to the bottom of the pot for steam to pass through. Pour the last tablespoon of olive oil over the rice. Pour the reserved saffron water over the top, as well.
11. Cover the pot with a clean kitchen towel (or two sheets of paper towels) then cover with the lid. Wrap the rest of the towel over the lid. The towel will catch the extra steam and prevent condensation from dripping down back into the rice. This will keep the rice from getting sticky.
12. Reduce the heat to simmer and steam the rice until done, about 45-60 minutes.
13. To serve the rice, place an inverted plate over your pot and carefully flip the pot and the plate

together. Gently remove the pot so that the crust is on top of the rice. Alternatively, reserve the top scoop of rice, then scatter the remaining rice in your serving platter, adding the reserved rice for the top. Remove the potato crust and place along the side of your serving platter. If your crust is not golden brown, continue cooking the potato slices over medium high heat for several more minutes, checking often to prevent them from burning.





Steamed Mussels with Saffron Broth

Next time you are watching the big game, flex your muscles with steamed mussels. This is an easy appetizer or a wonderful meal for two. The mussels are steamed in a combination of wine, lemon juice and olive oil. Make sure you have plenty of bread to soak up the delectable broth. Don't be intimidated by saffron. You can learn more about saffron [here](#).

Serves 2

Ingredients:

1 pound mussels
½ cup extra virgin olive oil
½ cup white wine
¼ cup lemon juice
2 garlic cloves, crushed
⅛ teaspoon ground saffron
zest from 1 lemon, grated
1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
salt and freshly ground pepper

Instructions:

1. Rinse the mussels well under cold water, scrubbing off any beards (the fibers attached to the shell). Discard any that are broken or open wide. Set mussels aside.
2. In a large skillet whisk together the remaining ingredients, except for the thyme, over medium heat until steamy, about 10 minutes.
3. Add mussels and cover. Cook until all of the mussels open, about 5 minutes. Discard any unopened mussels. Season sauce to taste with salt and pepper.
4. Top with fresh thyme and serve with bread or pasta.



Steamed Baby Beet and Brussels Sprout Salad

Baby beets are the perfect size for steaming, and perfectly sweet, too! And, by placing the olive-oil-coated beets in a shallow bowl over a bamboo steamer, you can collect their juices to make into a vinaigrette. Save the beet greens, as they are delicious when eaten raw or steamed.

Serves 2

Ingredients:

3 baby beets
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
8 large Brussels sprouts
2 tablespoons feta cheese, crumbled

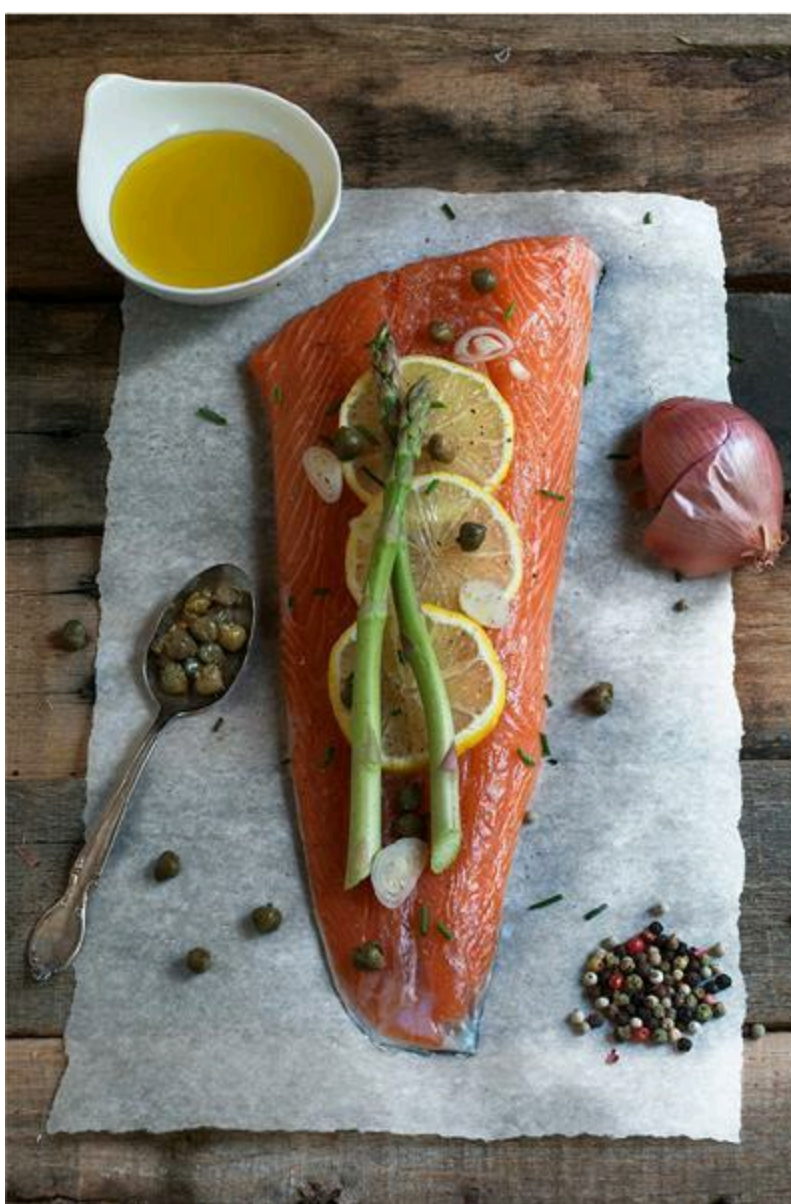
Vinaigrette Ingredients:

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
¼ cup red wine vinegar
1 garlic clove, minced
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
reserved beet juice from steaming

Instructions:

1. Remove the greens and gently wash the beets in water. Peel the beets and place in a small, heatproof shallow bowl.
2. Fill a wok or a pot large enough to hold a bamboo steamer with 2 inches of water. Place the bamboo steamer into the wok. Place the shallow bowl holding the beets into the steamer and cover. The shallow bowl will collect the juice “sweating” from the beets. You will use this juice in the vinaigrette.
3. Bring the water to a boil and steam until the beets are fork tender, 35-45 minutes.
4. Carefully remove the basket from the steam and allow the beets to cool to room temperature, about 1 hour. Chill until ready to serve.
5. Strain the beet juice and blend with the other vinaigrette ingredients.
6. Shred or slice Brussels sprouts thinly and place on two serving plates.
7. Slice beets in half and divide among the two plates. Top with feta and serve with vinaigrette.





Steamed Salmon with Olive Oil in Parchment (*Saumon en Papillote*)

You can also steam your food in the oven using parchment paper. This technique works well for fish and chicken. Use any of your favorite vegetables, such as broccoli, mushrooms, or asparagus. Double the recipe, make an assembly line for your next party, and involve your guests to custom-make their own entrée.

Serves 2

Ingredients:

2 salmon fillets, 5 ounces each or 1 large fillet
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon lemon pepper
4 slices of lemon
8 asparagus stalks
1 small shallot, sliced
1 tablespoon capers
½ teaspoon fresh chives

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 450°F.
2. Rinse salmon fillets in water and pat dry with paper towels. Place each salmon fillet in the center of a 16" x 12" piece of parchment paper.
3. Brush salmon with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Divide the slices of lemon and place on top of each fillet. Next, add asparagus, shallots, capers, and chives to each fillet.
4. Pull the two long ends of parchment paper straight up, fold ends together, and continue to roll and crimp until tightly sealed. Roll and crimp the smaller ends of the parchment paper until your package is wrapped.
5. Place fish packets onto a baking sheet and bake for 15 minutes. Remove from the oven and allow packets to rest for 5 minutes before opening.
6. Place packet on your plate and open slowly and carefully to avoid burning your hands from the hot steam.

Chapter Six:

Baking with Olive Oil

Olive oil is a terrific choice for lowering saturated fats in your baked goods. Because of the multiple choices of flavors and intensities of olive oil, you must find one that will match well with whatever you're baking. This is best done by tasting the olive oil on its own. This choice is typically a personal preference.

Olive oil is not just for baking muffins. You can also make breads, cakes, scones and cookies. For recipes that include a vegetable oil, replace it with the same amount of olive oil. The ratio here is 1:1. When substituting butter in baked recipes, however, a better ratio is 4:3. So, for every cup of butter used, replace with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of olive oil.

Not all baking recipes will result in success when you substitute olive oil for butter. For example, any recipes that must stay solid at room temperature, such as cake frosting, will not work with olive oil.

Remember, when baking with olive oil, you want the oil you choose to enhance the flavor of your creation. A low-quality oil can leave an unpleasant aftertaste, so choose an oil that you would enjoy drizzled on your salad or your bread. If you do not like the taste of the oil in its raw form, do not add it to your recipe.





Whole Wheat Scones with Blueberries and Lavender

Typically, scones are made with cold butter and white flour. These whole wheat scones are both moist, crumbly, and bursting with flavor from fresh blueberries and lavender. They are perfect to enjoy with your morning tea or for an afternoon snack.

Serves 6

Ingredients:

2 cups whole wheat flour
⅓ cup fresh lavender, loosely packed
1 tablespoon baking powder
⅛ teaspoon salt
¼ cup raw sugar, reserving ½ teaspoon to top scones
⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil
¼ cup nonfat Greek yogurt, plain
¼ cup low-fat milk
1 large egg
1 tablespoon wheat bran
4 ounces fresh blueberries

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or use a silicone baking mat.
2. In a food processor, pulse to combine flour, lavender, baking powder, and salt. Reserve ½ teaspoon of the raw sugar and pulse the rest of the sugar with the flour mixture.
3. Pulse and pour the olive oil into the mixture until crumbly.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together the yogurt, milk, and eggs. Pulse and combine egg mixture with the rest of the ingredients.
5. Turn the crumbly dough onto a lightly floured surface or silicone baking mat and press dough together to form a circle or rectangle ½-inch thick, pressing the wheat bran onto the surface of the dough.
6. Spread most of the blueberries onto half of the dough and fold the empty half over it.
7. Press any runaway and remaining blueberries onto the top of the dough.
8. Cut into 6 equal pieces, garnish the tops with reserved raw sugar and transfer scones onto the prepared baking sheet.
9. Bake for 12-15 minutes, until golden. Allow scones to cool on the baking sheet for 5 minutes. Serve warm or place on a cooling rack to cool completely.

Note: If you do not have fresh lavender, substitute with culinary lavender, available in specialty food stores.





Kalamata Olive Bread with Rosemary

The smell of freshly baked bread will call everyone to the table. This olive bread will be quickly devoured, whether you are eating it plain or decide to dip it in your favorite olive oil and balsamic vinegar.

Yield: 10-inch round loaf

Ingredients:

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup warm water (100°F)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon quick active dry yeast
2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour, plus approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ cup more for kneading
1 tablespoon sugar
1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, coarsely chopped
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
2 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil, plus 1 teaspoon to brush on the top
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup coarsely chopped kalamata olives, pitted

Instructions:

1. In a small bowl or measuring cup mix together the yeast and warm water. Let it rest for 5-7 minutes, until yeast is foamy.
2. In a larger bowl whisk together flour, sugar, rosemary and salt. Create a well in the center of the bowl and pour in the olive oil and foamy yeast mixture.
3. Using a fork at first, start mixing the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients until a coarse dough is formed. Using well-floured hands, continue to mix dough until a rough ball is formed.
4. Turn dough onto a lightly floured work surface and knead the dough, adding in the chopped olives as you work. Continue to sprinkle in more flour (up to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup) while you knead until dough is smooth and not sticky, about 10 minutes.
5. Place dough ball onto a baking sheet with a silicone baking mat, cover with a clean kitchen towel and place in a warm area to rise until it doubles in size, about 2-3 hours.
6. Preheat oven to 400°F.
7. Remove the towel and cut two lines into the dough. Brush with 1 teaspoon of olive oil and bake until bread is golden, about 15-20 minutes.



Olive Oil Almond Cookies with Rosewater and Cardamom

This little cookie packs a big crunch. Use a nutty-flavored olive oil to bring out the almond goodness and highlight the hints of rosewater and cardamom.

Yield: 40 cookies

Ingredients:

1 cup almond meal
¾ cup unbleached all-purpose flour
½ cup light brown sugar, packed
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground cardamom
½ cup extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon rosewater
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or use a silicone baking mat.
2. In medium size bowl, whisk together the dry ingredients.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together the wet ingredients.
4. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry and mix until incorporated.
5. Scoop out 1 tablespoon of dough, flatten it into a circle, about ¼-inch thick, and place onto the prepared baking sheet. Continue doing this with the rest of the dough until the baking sheet is full, spacing the cookies about one inch apart.
6. Bake for 12 minutes or until the edges are golden. Allow cookies to cool on the baking sheet for 5 minutes then transfer to a cooling rack to cool completely.

Note: Rosewater can be found in Middle Eastern markets.



Dark Chocolate Olive Oil Cake with Strawberries

Moist and filled with extra chocolatey goodness, use either a fruity or neutral olive oil, depending on your personal palate.

Yield: 1 9-inch round cake

Ingredients:

1 cup unbleached all-purpose flour
½ cup dark cocoa powder
2 teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
¾ cup granulated sugar
¾ cup nonfat Greek yogurt, plain
3 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
½ cup extra virgin olive oil
¾ cup dark chocolate chips
8 large strawberries, halved with the tops removed

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Apply nonstick spray to a 9-inch round baking pan and line the bottom with parchment paper.
2. In a medium-sized bowl whisk together the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt.
3. In a large bowl, mix the sugar, yogurt, eggs, vanilla, and olive oil together until combined.
4. In batches, mix the flour mixture into the yogurt and stir until combined. Stir in the chocolate chips, then pour the cake batter into the prepared pan.
5. Arrange the strawberry halves over the top of the cake.
6. Bake for 40-45 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
7. Allow the cake to cool on the pan for 15 minutes then gently run a knife along the side of the cake. Carefully remove the cake from the pan and transfer to a cooling rack to cool completely.
8. Serve alone, dusted with powdered sugar, or add a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

Chapter Seven:

Other Cooking Techniques Using Olive Oil

Infusing with Olive Oil

Oils infused with garlic, fresh herbs, dried herbs or hot peppers are called flavored or infused oils. Adding spices and herbs to extra virgin olive oil adds interesting flavors and enhance the oils. Usually the herb is bruised. To bruise, gently rub a few sprigs of herbs in your hands. This step will make it easier for the oil to penetrate and for aromas to escape.

Important: Commercially prepared flavored olive oils are usually safe to keep and use for a long time. Homemade oils are not. If you make your own infused oils, make up a small batch, keep it refrigerated and use it up within a few days.

Tips on Infusing:

- Infused oils can replace butters on bread and pastas and have a multitude of uses in the kitchen.
- Oil is heated before the herb or spice is added to remove any bacteria present.
- Toast whole spices, nuts and seeds before grinding and adding to the oil, for a more complex flavor.
- Flavored oils can be used to finish a dish, or to make into sauces, dressings or marinades.
- If the oil becomes cloudy, discard.



Triple-Herb Infused Olive Oil

In a clean bottle, add one rosemary sprig, two oregano sprigs, and two thyme sprigs to the bottle. Heat approximately 2 cups of olive oil to a simmer for 10 minutes. Bring the oil back to room temperature and pour into your bottle. Refrigerate immediately and use up within a few days.

Vanilla and Cinnamon Infused Olive Oil

In a clean bottle, add two vanilla beans and a cinnamon stick. Heat approximately 2 cups of olive oil to a simmer for 10 minutes. Bring the oil back to room temperature and pour into your bottle. Refrigerate immediately and use up within a few days.

Garlic and Peppercorn Infused Olive Oil

In a small clean jar, add 6-8 garlic cloves and 10 peppercorns. Heat approximately 2 cups of the olive oil to a simmer for 10 minutes. Bring the oil back to room temperature and pour into your bottle. Refrigerate immediately and use up within a few days.

Baby Rose Bud and Clove Infused Olive Oil

In a clean bottle, add clean, dried rose buds and whole cloves. Heat approximately 2 cups of the olive oil to a simmer for 10 minutes. Bring the oil back to room temperature and pour into your bottle. Refrigerate immediately and use up within a few days.



Whipping with Olive Oil

Whipping olive oil in a food processor or blender emulsifies and thickens the sauce to create a smooth, thick dressing for your sandwiches. The key to successfully whipping vinegars into your olive oil is to start slowly, adding the oil drop by drop. Make sure all of the ingredients are at room temperature. Use an olive oil that is mild in taste.

Homemade Mayonnaise

Yield: 1¼ cups

Ingredients:

- 1 large egg yolk, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil, divided
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Instructions:

1. Place the egg yolk in a medium bowl. Using a whisk, beat until eggs are light and fluffy.
2. Whisk in mustard and lemon juice.
3. Slowly whisk in ¼ cup of olive oil. Do not rush as you add the remaining olive oil. Whisk continuously until mayonnaise thickens, about 30 minutes.
4. Season with salt and pepper.
5. Cover and chill. Refrigerate for up to 5 days.

For variations:

Herbal: add 2 tablespoons of freshly chopped chives, parsley, tarragon or oregano.

Horseradish: add 2 tablespoons of spicy horseradish, just before serving.

Garlic: add 1 crushed garlic clove with the egg yolks.

Note: Because of a slight risk of bacterial poisoning, the USDA advises against the consumption of raw eggs by pregnant women, young children, and anyone having a weakened immune system or other compromised health issues. Pasteurized fresh eggs are commercially available and safe to use.



Blending with Olive Oil

Most often when blending with olive oil, the end product is an emulsified sauce called a “vinaigrette.” The word “vinaigrette” comes from the French word for vinegar. Vinaigrettes are generally used for salad dressings, toppings for vegetables, or dressings for rice and grain salads.

Tips on Blending:

- The standard proportions for a vinaigrette are 3 parts olive oil to 1 part vinegar.
- The vinegar and salt are combined first to dissolve the salt.
- Herbs, mustards and other flavorings are added before dressing the salads.
- The salad ingredients must be dry before adding the vinaigrette, to insure even coating.
- Vinaigrettes can be used for dipping sauces, glazes or marinades.
- A fast, simple method for making a vinaigrette is to place everything in a bottle and shake.



Here are three easy vinaigrettes showing the varying degree of special ingredients you can add to create a delicious dressing.

Oregano and Mustard Vinaigrette

Ingredients:

⅓ cup red wine vinegar
½ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1 garlic clove, peeled and minced
½ teaspoon dried oregano
¾ cup extra virgin olive oil

Instructions:

1. In a bowl, add the vinegar and salt. Whisk to blend.
2. Add the mustard, pepper, garlic and oregano. Continue whisking.
3. Slowly whisk in the olive oil until thickened.

Lavender Vinaigrette

Ingredients:

⅓ cup sherry vinegar
½ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon fresh lavender buds
1 teaspoon fresh thyme
1 teaspoon fresh marjoram
¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1 shallot, minced
¾ cup extra virgin olive oil

Instructions:

1. In a bowl add the vinegar and salt. Whisk together.
2. Add the lavender, thyme, marjoram, pepper and shallot. Whisk all ingredients together.
3. Slowly whisk in the extra-virgin olive oil until thickened.

Pomegranate and Basil Vinaigrette

Ingredients:

⅓ cup balsamic vinegar
½ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon fresh basil, chopped
¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1 minced shallot
2 tablespoons pomegranate concentrate
¾ cup extra virgin olive oil

Instructions:

1. In a bowl, add balsamic vinegar and salt. Whisk together.
2. Add the basil, pepper, shallot and pomegranate concentrate. Whisk all ingredients together.
3. Slowly whisk in the extra virgin olive oil until thickened.

Note: Pomegranate concentrate is pomegranate juice that has been reduced down to a syrup consistency, without adding sugar. It can be found in Middle Eastern markets. Or you can make your own: bring 2 cups of pomegranate juice to boil, then reduce heat to low heat. Continue cooking until liquid is reduced to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup, about 20 minutes.



Roasting with Olive Oil

There are many thoughts about cooking with olive oil at high heat. The general consensus is that many factors affect the smoking point of an oil. The more refinement an oil is put through, the lower the free fatty acids, thus producing a higher smoking point. But good quality extra virgin olive oils in their purest form are naturally low in free fatty acids. Therefore, they have a high smoking point and are safe for roasting.

The main questions regarding roasting with olive oil are the cost and the taste. High quality olive oil is expensive and some feel should not be wasted on high temperature cooking, since the fruitiness of the oil is lost when used this way. This can be resolved by adding an extra drizzle of olive oil when the meal is served.

Roasted Baby Carrots with Thyme

Baby carrots are naturally sweet, so why add more sugar? Keep it simple with a bit of seasoning and some fresh thyme.

Serves 4

Ingredients:

16 baby carrots
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
¼ teaspoon salt
⅛ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1 tablespoon fresh thyme

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Wash carrots and trim the ends. Pat dry with paper towel and arrange in one layer on a baking sheet.
3. Coat carrots with olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
4. Roast in the oven until fork tender, about 25 minutes. Transfer carrots to a serving platter, garnish with fresh thyme and serve.





Eating Raw with Olive Oil

What can you drizzle with olive oil and eat raw? Just about anything. A delicious olive oil will enhance the flavor of any food or drink. Yes, drink! Olive oil can taste fruity and a splash of it is all you need in this watermelon shooter. The three layers of flavor are poured in one at a time and naturally separate into their layers. Remember, the key to enjoying olive oil “in the raw” is to select an oil that has the right flavor and intensity that appeals to you.

Watermelon Shooters with Persian Mint Syrup and Olive Oil

Serves: 16 shots

Sekanjabin (Persian Mint Syrup) Ingredients:

1 cup granulated sugar
3½ cups water
¼ cup white wine vinegar
½ cup fresh mint, loosely packed

Watermelon Shooters Ingredients

3 pounds seedless watermelon, peeled and chopped
½ cup fresh orange juice
1 cup vodka (optional)
⅓ cup syrup
8 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil, divided
zest from 1 orange, grated

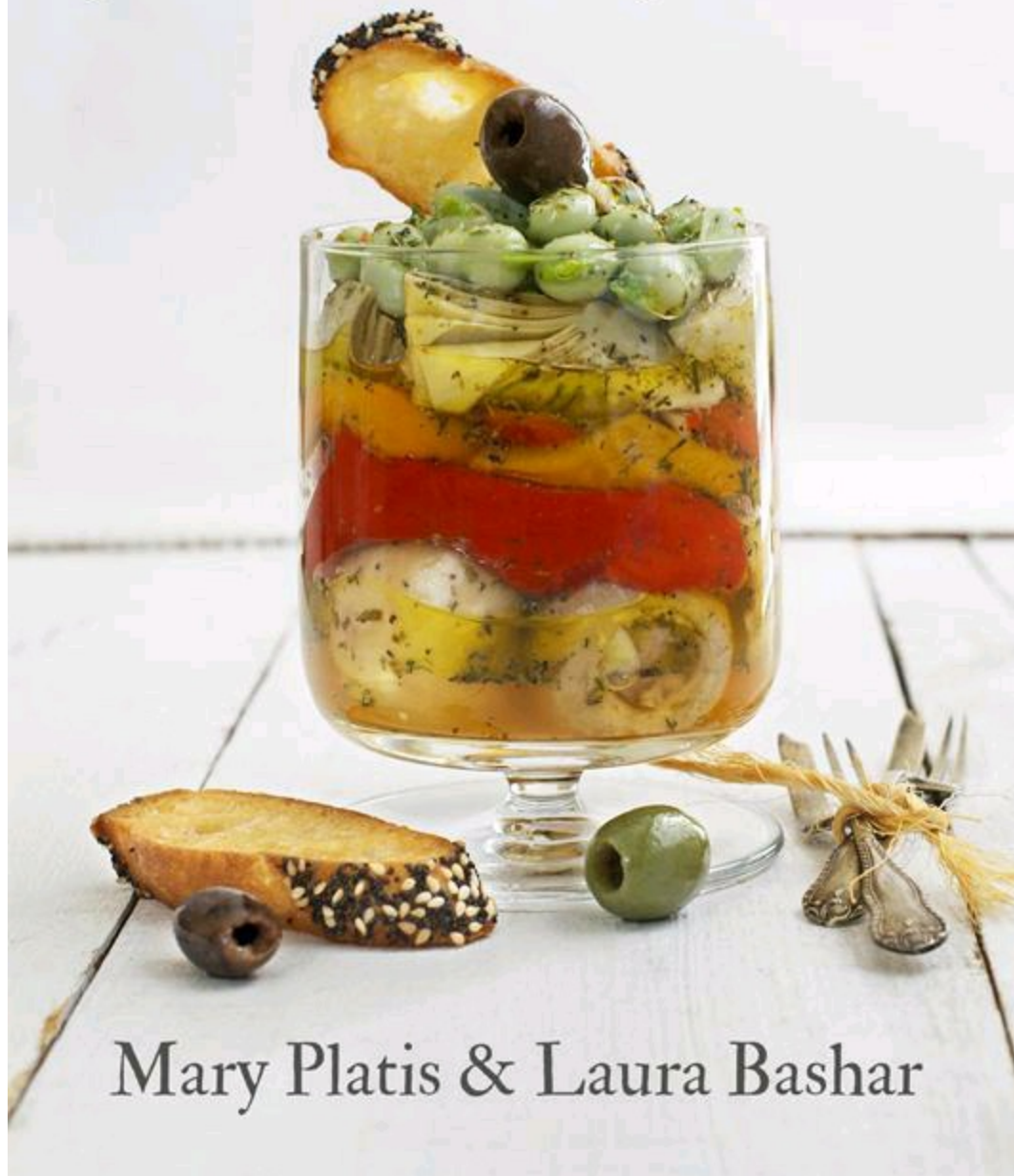
Instructions:

1. To make the mint syrup, whisk water and sugar in a small pot over medium-high heat until dissolved.
2. Let syrup boil together for 5-10 minutes, then add vinegar.
3. Reduce heat to medium and cook until syrup thickens, about 20-30 minutes.
4. Remove from heat and stir in the fresh mint. Using a slotted spoon, remove mint when syrup has cooled.
5. To prepare your shooters, place the watermelon, vodka and orange juice in a blender and process until smooth.
6. Pour juice through a strainer to remove any seeds.
7. In a tall shot glass add 1 teaspoon of cooled mint syrup.
8. Pour in 2 ounces of watermelon mix next.
9. Top with ½ teaspoon of olive oil and garnish with grated zest. *Salut!*

Note: This recipe will make ¾ cup of syrup, but you only need ⅓ cup of it to make 16 watermelon shooters. The syrup will keep in the refrigerator for up to one month. Dilute it with water to make a cooler or use as a dip with your romaine lettuce. [Learn more about Sekanjabin here.](#)

Cooking Techniques With

Olive Oil



Mary Platis & Laura Bashar

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